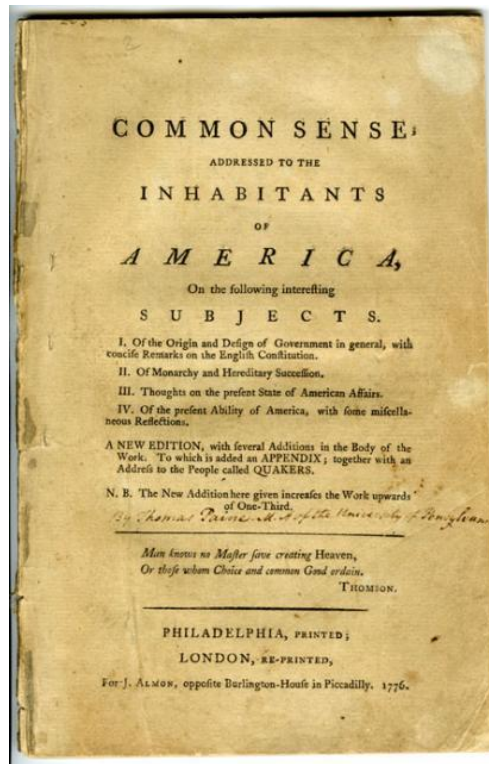


Thomas Paine – Common Sense

Early in 1776, colonist Thomas Paine published *Common Sense*, a pamphlet that was widely read throughout the colonies. In this document, Paine argued that the colonists should declare independence from England, in his opinion, because England had violated the colonists' rights. He also provided other reasons to support his desire to break away from England. The following passages are quotes from *Common Sense*:



"Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island."

perpetually - continuing or enduring forever; everlasting.

1. According to Paine, why does colonial independence make sense?

“A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.”

formidable – inspiring fear or respect through being impressively large, powerful, intense, or capable.

tumult - confusion or disorder.

2. What is Paine saying about the colonists in this passage?

Reconciliation Better than Independence?

reconciliation – the process of returning to friendly relations

oppressor – a person who uses power in a cruel or unfair way

mutual – the same for all groups involved

flourish – to grow or exist in a positive situation

After Thomas Paine wrote *Common Sense*, colonial priest and educator William Smith wrote a series of public letters in 1776 under the name “Cato”.

We have already declared ourselves independent, as to all useful purposes, by resisting our oppressors upon our own foundation. And while we keep upon this ground, without connecting ourselves with any foreign nations, to involve us in fresh difficulties and endanger our liberties still further, we are able, in our own element (upon the shore), to continue this resistance; and it is our duty to continue it till Great Britain is convinced (as she must soon be) of her fatal policy, and open her arms to reconciliation, upon the permanent and sure footing of mutual interests and safety.

Upon such a footing, we may again be happy. Our trade will be revived. Our language, our laws, and manners being the same with those of the nation with which we are again to be connected, that connection will be natural; and we shall the more easily guard against future concerns. Pennsylvania has much to lose in this contest and much to hope from a proper settlement of it. We have long flourished under our charter government. What may be the consequences of another form we cannot predict with certainty; but this we know, that it is a road we have not traveled and may be worse than it is described.

1. Who does William Smith blame for the problems between England and the colonists?

Support your answer with details and context clues from the passage.

2. Circle the statement that best summarizes the passage?

- A) The author is unhappy with England and believes the colonists should fight for independence.
- B) The author supports England and believes the colonists should obey the king.
- C) The author is unhappy with England, but fears the thought of independence.
- D) The author sees no benefit from remaining loyal to England.

Support your answer with details from the passage. (Paraphrase the text, don't copy it word for word)

3. Do Smith and Paine agree or disagree about the best way to deal with the problems between England and the colonies? Explain
